

Contextualization 4 (Set 3)

Analysis: History - Paul Revere

Contextualization: Framing

This paper scores a 4 for framing. While there is an attempt to provide reasonable background of the text and content, there are some glaring gaps, including:

Who is Paul Revere, what did he do, and when did Paul Revere live?

What is the second text being referred to?

Why is the Civil War mentioned?

Longfellow wrote about a Revolutionary War hero during the Civil War to inspire Northern soldiers to keep fighting, but this is not made clear to the reader of this essay.

Essay: Lit - Watsons Go to Birmingham

Prompt: How does Longfellow use writing moves (use of imagery and word choice, use of figurative language, omission or changing of historical facts) to achieve his purpose in the poem “Paul Revere’s Ride?”

In the poem, “Paul Revere's Ride,” Longfellow uses word choice to create mood and the use of changing or omitting facts to achieve his purpose of inspiring and entertaining his readers. Written during the Civil War, Longfellow wanted to inspire and entertain Northern soldiers with a heroic poem to urge them to keep fighting and to not give up. To achieve this purpose Longfellow had to revise what really happened to make Revere look more heroic than he actually was. Some things he did to achieve this purpose of inspiring and entertaining is the use of specific word choice to create an ominous mood and altering historical facts.

Longfellow uses word choice to create an ominous mood in his poem. He describes The Somerset, when he sees it in the Charleston River, as “A phantom ship” with “Sombre rafters.” Sombre means dull and dark. This is the mood and feeling of the poem. In the sixth stanza it says, “Creeping along from tent to tent and

seeming to whisper 'all is well'..." where he seems to be describing the wind in the town of the people.

Again, here is that word-creeping- that is creating a foreboding mood and feeling. Also, he uses words like dread, dead and spectral. This is where Longfellow describes Paul Revere's friend looking down on the hill of the dead on top of the Belfry Church. Spectral is ghostly and who doesn't have the hair on the back of their neck stand up when they hear the words dread and dead? He chooses these words to entertain his readers by creating a feeling of suspense and an ominous mood.

Longfellow also changes and omits historical facts in his poem, "Paul Revere's Ride." In Paul Revere's letter to the Boston Historical Society it says, "...come to arrest us. I called for the Doctor & Dawes to come up; we tried to get past them; but they being armed with pistols and swords, they forced us into the field; -the Doctor jumped his horse over a low Stone wall, and escaped to Concord." What this quotation is indicating is that Paul Revere got arrested, and he never made it to Concord. Only the doctor did because he jumped over a low stone wall with his horse. In Longfellow's poem "Paul Revere's Ride," he writes, "It was two by the village clock, When he came to the bridge in Concord town.

He heard the bleating of the flock..." This quotation indicates that Paul Revere was there in Concord by himself.

Longfellow used word choice and the use of changing and omitting facts to achieve his purpose of entertaining and inspiring Northern soldiers. He wanted to create an ominous mood to entertain his readers, while inspiring them with a heroic idol. He could have just written a newspaper article or a biography about it. He chose to write it in poem form. He wanted to do this because he wanted to achieve his purpose of entertaining and inspiring Northern soldiers to keep fighting.